



State of Arizona

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Governor Jan Brewer Announces Don Cardon Will Stay as President and CEO of Arizona Commerce Authority

Governor seeks to finalize innovative private/public model for Authority

PHOENIX — Arizona's aggressive economic growth plans took significant steps forward today as Governor Jan Brewer announced two more developments in the evolution of the Arizona Commerce Authority and its innovative private/public model.

The Governor said that Don Cardon will stay on as President and CEO of the Arizona Commerce Authority and that she will work with the state legislature to finish re-creating the Authority as a streamlined, modern organization that unleashes the most innovative minds in the business community.

Cardon was appointed as Director of the Arizona Department of Commerce about 18-months ago and has overseen the organization's transformation into the new Arizona Commerce Authority. He had previously announced plans to step down at the end of the year and return to the private sector. But Governor Brewer, in consultation with the Authority Board's executive committee, convinced Cardon to stay and implement the bold vision she and Cardon have already created for the Authority.

"Don Cardon's work with me in restructuring and revitalizing the new Commerce Authority has been groundbreaking," said Governor Brewer. "His credibility in the arena of business and industry is essential to our success in advancing Arizona's economy. With Don Cardon, we have the right person to lead the Authority."

Cardon will continue to direct the restructured organization, which will be focused on attracting businesses to Arizona, and retaining and expanding existing businesses that create more high-wage, quality jobs.

“My sincere intention was to return to the private sector. However, Governor Brewer and Mr. Colangelo convinced me this is the most critical time for Arizona,” said Don Cardon. “Since the Governor has allowed me to assist her in designing the roadmap we are collectively pursuing, I realized this was a unique time in life where my continued involvement may be best concerning all the ACA is aggressively endeavoring to achieve. I am honored to be entrusted with such confidence and support and thankful to each of the Board members for giving the ACA the credibility our state so desperately needs in its economic pursuits.”

Governor Brewer said she will work with the legislature in the coming months to repeal all the statutory mandates surrounding the existing Commerce Authority and develop a new funding model so the Authority can be reformed into a private/public model. Additionally, Governor Brewer and Cardon will be working closely with the legislature to develop and implement more pro-business tax policies.

Glenn Hamer, President & CEO of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said Cardon has the full support of the business community. “Don Cardon has the tenacity and know-how we need,” said Hamer. “He’s a business savvy leader who is making the Commerce Authority as nimble and smart as the companies we’re trying to attract and grow.”

“Don has the great ability to both establish a vision and ground it in reality,” said Michael Manson, Co-Founder/Executive Chairman of Motor Excellence in Flagstaff. “His leadership is vital to our success and his integrity is present in all that he does.”

Cardon said he will continue to aggressively work in advancing growth sectors, create more robust international opportunities, continue to build on relationships with other economic organizations and create jobs for Arizonans.

“Don is already leading the Commerce Authority to a much higher level and his retention is a great asset to Arizona’s economic development community,” said Barry Broome, President and CEO, Greater Phoenix Economic Council. “Don has reached out to GPEC in ways unseen during my tenure here and I cannot express the difference it makes to realize we have a true partner in the state.”

Cardon’s expertise is supported by a powerful new Commerce Authority Board that’s populated with a prestigious mix of Arizona top business CEO’s, senior legislative leaders and the state’s university presidents. Governor Brewer serves as chair and Jerry Colangelo, Partner of JDM Partners and Chairman of USA Basketball, is co-chair.

Arizona’s Growth Sector report and Growth Sector Committee reports can be found under the Arizona Commerce Authority tab at www.azgovernor.gov.

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